



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE

DIRK KEMPTHORNE – Governor
KARL B. KURTZ – Director

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
450 West State Street, 10th Floor
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0036
PHONE 208-334-5625
FAX 208-334-0668

NEWS RELEASE

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Ross Mason
(208) 334-0693

National Immunization Expert Highlights ‘Shots Smarts’ Conferences

Gary S. Marshall, M.D., a clinician, educator, author and investigator of infectious diseases, will speak to Idaho healthcare providers next week about essential early childhood immunizations and how vital immunizations are in preventing life threatening childhood diseases.

Dr. Marshall will give the keynote address to the ‘Shot Smarts’ conferences sponsored by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare’s Immunization Program. The Shot Smarts conferences are an effort to increase the state’s early childhood immunization rate. The conferences will be held in Boise, Pocatello and Coeur d’Alene next week.

“Immunizations are one of the most important things we do as health care professionals. No public health intervention short of sanitation has been more effective in preventing disease and saving lives,” says Marshall. “The challenge comes in remembering the diseases that vaccines have held at bay, and realizing that every shot administered is another potential health disaster averted.”

Diphtheria, measles, pertussis (whooping cough), and polio are still endemic in many countries and can be transported as people travel around the world, leaving unvaccinated children – in the U.S. and elsewhere – susceptible. Immunizations protect children from these life-threatening diseases that can cause permanent health problems.

Immunizations are recommended at birth, 2-months, 4-months, 6-months, between 12- and 18-months, and 24-months of age. Additional vaccines may be required for older children and adults.

Dr. Marshall’s keynote address for the Shot Smarts conferences will explore the myths and truths surrounding immunizations and discuss ways to address parental concerns about vaccination.

Dr. Marshall is the Professor of Pediatrics and Director of the Fellowship Training Program at the University of Louisville School of Medicine. Dr. Marshall also serves as attending physician at Kosair Children’s Hospital and maintains a busy outpatient infectious disease practice. Dr. Marshall is known nationally for his work in the area of education and clinical trial, vaccine advocacy, and his recent book entitled *The Vaccine Handbook: A Practical Guide for Clinicians*.

For more information about immunizations, call your local health department or the Idaho CareLine at 2-1-1 or 1-800-926-2588.

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(Editors: For more information please contact Andy Noble of the Idaho Immunization Program at 334-5901.)